

Wages rise 0.9 per cent in December quarter 2023

Media Release

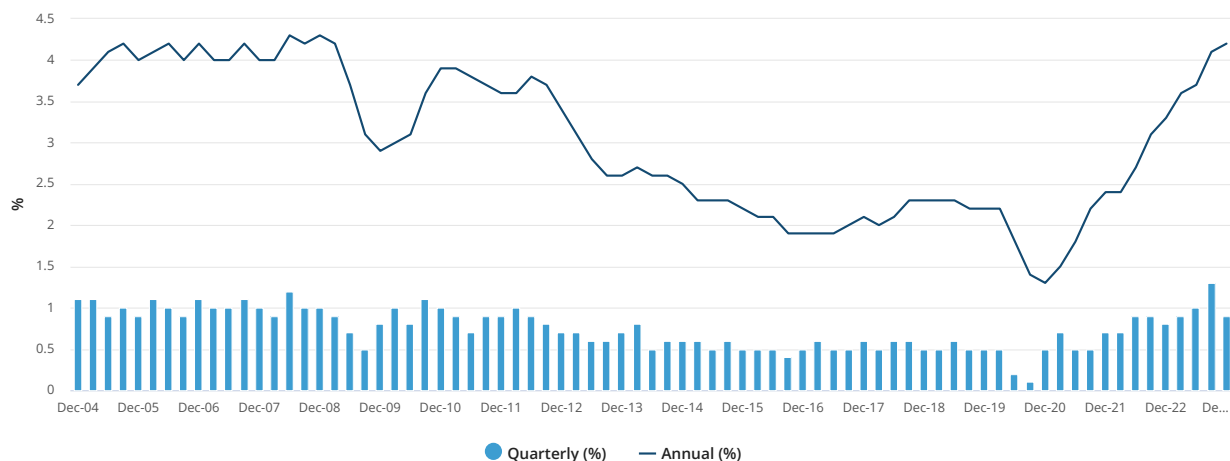
Released 21/02/2024

Source:

[Wage Price Index, Australia, December 2023 \(/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/wage-price-index-australia/dec-2023\)](#)

The Wage Price Index (WPI) rose 0.9 per cent in December quarter 2023, and 4.2 per cent for the year, according to seasonally adjusted data released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

All sector WPI, quarterly and annual movement (%), seasonally adjusted (a)



a. See Interpretation of index numbers, Percentage change and rounding on the [Methodology \(/methodologies/wage-price-index-australia-methodology/dec-2023\)](#) page.

Private sector wage growth in December quarter 2023 is comparable to December 2022 (also 0.9 per cent), while the public sector had the highest quarterly rise in 15 years (1.3 per cent).

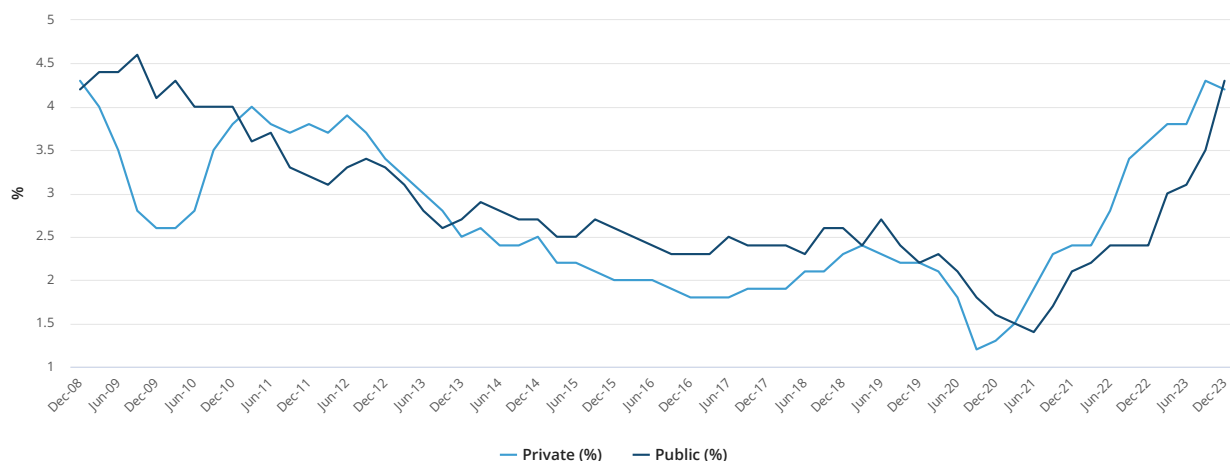
Michelle Marquardt, ABS head of prices statistics, said: "For both the public and private sector, wages growth was

driven by organisation-wide annual wage and salary reviews. Wage growth for December quarter 2023 saw a higher contribution from jobs covered by enterprise agreements than is typically recorded for a December quarter.

“Higher growth in the public sector was primarily due to newly implemented enterprise agreements for essential workers in the Health care and social assistance and Education and training industries following changes to state-based wages policies.”

December quarter annual wages growth, at 4.2 per cent, increased compared to the September quarter (4.1 per cent) and is the highest recorded annual growth since the March quarter 2009 (also 4.2 per cent). While wages growth in the private sector eased slightly to 4.2 per cent for the year to December quarter 2023 (from 4.3 per cent in September quarter 2023), the public sector had the highest wage growth since March quarter 2010 at 4.3 per cent.

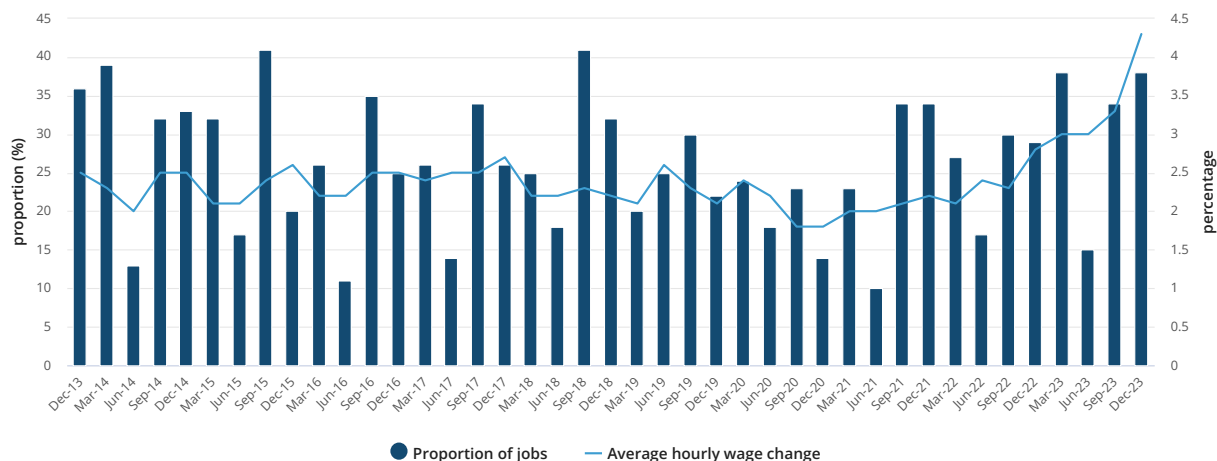
Annual wage growth by sector, seasonally adjusted (a)



a. See Interpretation of index numbers, Percentage change and rounding on the [Methodology \(/methodologies/wage-price-index-australia-methodology/dec-2023\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/wage-price-index-australia-methodology/dec-2023) page.

“The proportion of public sector jobs with a wage rise can vary due to the cyclical pattern of enterprise bargaining. In the December quarter 2023, 38 per cent of public sector jobs saw a wage rise, considerably higher than the 29 per cent from the same quarter in the previous year. The average hourly wage change for these jobs has lifted to 4.3 per cent, higher than 2.8 per cent at the same time last year and the highest recorded since September 2008.” Ms Marquardt said.

Quarterly wage dynamics in the public sector, original (a)



a. Average hourly wage change only includes jobs recording a wage movement in the current quarter.

In original terms, quarterly wage growth across the industries was highest in the Education and training industry (1.7 per cent), and the lowest in the Accommodation and food services industry (0.3 per cent).

Annual wage growth was highest in the Health care and social assistance industry (5.5 per cent), the highest growth since the start of the series in September quarter 1998. At 3.2 per cent, the Finance and insurance services industry had the lowest annual growth in wages.

While not affecting the hourly earnings measured in the WPI, changes in employment levels and hours worked within the labour market can influence average earnings. These changes will be reflected in Average Weekly Earnings released Thursday, 22 February 2024.

More information can be found in [Wage Price Index, Australia \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/wage-price-index-australia/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/wage-price-index-australia/latest-release), December 2023.

Media notes

- When reporting ABS data you must attribute the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or the ABS) as the source.
- To learn more about different measures of wages change, their purpose and how to use them, see our [Earnings guide \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/earning-s-guide\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/earning-s-guide). It provides summary information on our various earnings measures including the Wage Price Index.
- December quarter 2023 Wage Price Index data captures wage information for the mid-month (November) of the December quarter.
- You can access high resolution images of ABS spokespeople, including Michelle Marquardt, from our [image library \(https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/abs-image-library\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/abs-image-library).
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team via [media@abs.gov.au \(mailto:media@abs.gov.au\)](mailto:media@abs.gov.au).

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